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FBI testimony backs theory that money, ego tempt spies

By George Archibald
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Most of the 22 American citizens and foreign nationals who have been arrested for spy-related crimes in the past 18 months became involved for economic or personal reasons, Phillip A. Parker, deputy director of the FBI's intelligence division, told Congress recently.

His testimony gave substance to the theory of former Soviet KGB officer Stanislav Levchenko that money, ideology, compromise and ego — called MICE in counterintelligence shorthand — usually prompt people to commit espionage against their countries.

Early reports that romance alone prompted Sharon M. Scranage, a \$22,000-a-year CIA clerk, to give vital intelligence secrets to her reputed Ghanaian lover, Michael A. Soussoudis, have been challenged by Ms. Scranage's former husband.

"She's too bright a person to do that for love," Walter Smith of Oxon Hill, Md., told reporters over the weekend.

Family members disclosed that Ms. Scranage had sent glowing letters telling of good social times with new friends in Accra, Ghana's capital, where she was a CIA employee in the U.S. Embassy until May. Mr. Smith said she had written that she was glad to help people in the West African country because of their poor living conditions.

Ms. Scranage reportedly struck up an affair with Mr. Soussoudis, a relative of Ghana's pro-Soviet military dictator Jerry Rawlings. U.S. officials allege that Mr. Soussoudis then recruited her as a spy for the Ghanaian regime, which is closely allied with Libyan dictator Muammar Qaddafi.

"You frequently have to use more than one lever," Mr. Levchenko told

L'Express magazine in a recent interview. "The difficulty lies in approaching and engaging the person and zeroing in on his weak points and exploiting his ambitions," said the former director of Soviet active measures in Japan, who defected to the West in 1979.



Ernst L. W. Forbrich

"Hostile [intelligence] services seek to identify people with financial or professional problems that might make them especially vulnerable to exploitation," the FBI's Mr. Parker told the House Government Operations Committee last month.

Disgruntled employees of government agencies and defense contractors are sought-after targets of about 1,500 known or suspected intelligence officers at more than 220 Soviet, Cuban and other communist bloc diplomatic missions and businesses in the United States, Mr. Parker said.

"Revenge, ego and financial need

or greed motivate people to do many things — the most damaging step they can take is to commit espionage," he said.

In the case of Christopher Boyce and Andrew Lee — the infamous Falcon and Snowman — the lure was money, drugs and perceived political dissatisfaction, he said.

There have been eight spy-related convictions since January 1984 — five this year alone. Those now serving prison terms ranging from 5 years to life are:

- James D. Harper Jr., 50, a computer engineer who was paid \$250,000 for selling Minuteman missile secrets to the Polish intelligence service in Europe. Harper had no security clearance, but he used his wife, Ruby — now dead, but then secretary to a top executive of a defense contractor in California's Silicon Valley — to obtain the highly classified data. He is now serving a life term in prison.

- Ernst L. W. Forbrich, 43, manager of a West German gas station outside a U.S. Army base, who engaged in espionage for East Germany with an American serviceman. He was sentenced to 15 years in prison after attempting to obtain U.S. military secrets for East Germany while on a visit to Florida.

- Thomas P. Cavanagh, 40, Northrop Corp. aerospace engineer, who received two concurrent life terms for trying to sell Stealth bomber secrets for \$25,000 to FBI investigators posing as Soviet agents.

- Jay Clyde Wolff, 24, who received a five-year sentence for agreeing to sell classified documents dealing with naval weapons systems to an undercover agent in Albuquerque, N.M.

- Nikolai Ogorodnikov, 52, a Soviet emigre who was sentenced to eight years last month for conspiring with his estranged wife Svetlana and former FBI special agent Richard W. Miller to pass secret FBI documents to the Soviet Union for \$65,000.

Mr. Miller, 48, who was dismissed from the FBI for his role in the conspiracy, was granted immunity from prosecution in exchange for his testimony. Mrs. Ogorodnikova, 35, was sentenced yesterday to 18 years in federal prison by U.S. District Judge David V. Kenyon in Los Angeles.

Two East German nationals convicted in the United States of espionage last year were returned to East Germany in exchange for 25 Western intelligence agents — none of them Americans — imprisoned by the Soviet-bloc regime.

Swapped by the United States in the exchange were Alfred Zehe, 45, a physicist serving an eight-year term for buying secret U.S. documents for East Germany during a visit to Boston, and Alice Michelson, 67, an East German schoolteacher serving a 10-year sentence for trying to smuggle classified military information out of the United States in a pack of cigarettes.

In addition to Ms. Scranage and Mr. Soussoudis, 13 others arrested by the FBI for espionage since January 1984 are still awaiting trial.

• Three members of the John Walker family and a friend, all charged by the FBI over the past two months in Norfolk, Baltimore, and San Francisco with conspiring to sell Navy military secrets to the Soviet Union.

Members of the alleged spy ring, whose trials are expected to start Aug. 5, are John Anthony Walker Jr., 47, a retired Navy communications specialist; his son, Michael L. Walker, 22, a seaman aboard the aircraft carrier USS Nimitz; John Walker's brother, Arthur James Walker, 50, a former Navy officer, and Jerry A. Whitworth, 45, a California friend of John Walker's from their days together in the Navy.

• Four members of an alleged California-based spy ring, charged last August with stealing and con-

spiring to sell classified Navy computer codes. Awaiting trial are Michael T. Tobias, 21, a former crewman on the U.S.S. Peoria, a tank landing ship based in San Diego; his brother, Bruce E. Tobias, 19; Michael Tobias' nephew, Francis X. Pizzo II, 18; and Dale V. Irene, 24.

According to the FBI, the men unsuccessfully offered the codes to Soviet officials in San Francisco for \$100,000 and then contacted federal agents, offering to sell the codes for \$1,000 and a promise of immunity from prosecution.

• Karl F. Koecher, 50, a CIA contract employee from 1973 to 1977, indicted for conspiring with his wife to spy for their native Czechoslovakia. The Koechers emigrated to the United States in 1965. Hana Koecher, 40, was not charged and the 2nd U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals ruled in February that she could not be compelled to testify against her husband.

• Richard C. Smith, 41, a former Army counterintelligence specialist from Bellevue, Wash., charged with disclosing the identity of U.S. double agents to Viktor I. Okunev, a Soviet KGB officer in Tokyo. Mr. Smith admits selling the information to Mr. Okunev but contends he was a secret member of a CIA operation to infiltrate a KGB spy network in Japan.

• Samuel L. Morison, 40, of Crofton, Md., faces trial this month on charges of giving three secret satellite photographs of Soviet warships under construction to a British magazine, Jane's Defence Weekly.

Mr. Morison, a part-time U.S. editor for a companion publication, Jane's Fighting Ships, was employed by the Naval Intelligence Support Center in Suitland, Md. He is the grandson of Samuel Eliot Morison, a famous American naval historian.

Staff researcher Kathleen Bailey contributed to this report.